Policy and Requirements for Charter School Planning and Results Reporting

April 2015

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April 2015©

This document contains requirements for Alberta's charter school authorities.

This document is available online at:

http://education.alberta.ca/admin/resources/planning.aspx

and provides the requirements for:

- Charter school Three-Year Education Plans for 2015/2016 – 2017/2018. Charter school plans must be approved by the board and posted on the charter school website by November 30, 2015.
- Charter school Annual Education Results Reports on the 2014/2015 school year based on the Three-Year Education Plans for 2014/2015 – 2016/2017. Charter school reports are due by November 30, 2015.

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Policy and Requirements for Charter School Planning and Results Reporting, 2015 Edition

Requirements for:

- Charter school Three-Year Education Plans, (3YEPs) 2015/2016 to 2017/2018
- Charter school Annual Education Results Reports (AERRs) on the 2014/2015 school year

This document is issued under authority of the following:

- *School Act*, RSA 2000, Section 78
- *School Act*, RSA 2000, Section 36(1)
- Alberta Regulation 113/2007, *School Act, School Councils Regulation*
- Alberta Regulation 120/2008, *Government Organization Act, Education Grants Regulation*, Sections 2 and 7

A. Hesse
Deputy Minister of Education

May 19, 2015
Date

Policy and Requirements for Charter School Planning and Results Reporting

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What's Changed?

New Alberta Education Business Plan

Alberta Education's Business Plan 2015-2020 contains four desired outcomes. School authorities will need to develop their Three-Year Education Plans in alignment with this structure.

Whistleblower Protection

Section 32 of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act* (2013) requires that school authorities include their annual report of disclosures in their Annual Education Results Report or combined Three-Year Education Plan/Annual Education Results Report. For a copy of the legislation or for further information and resources, please visit the Public Interest Commissioner's website at www.yourvoiceprotected.ca.

This component is required for reporting in November 2015.

Provincial Assessment Programs

Aggregate results for Provincial Achievement Tests only include Grades 6 and 9 results. There is no reporting requirement in the Three-Year Education Plan/Annual Education Results Report related to the Grade 3 Student Learning Assessment pilot.

Background

Structure and Purpose of Alberta's K – 12 Education System

The basic education of Alberta's children is the responsibility of the provincial government and is governed by the *School Act*. Per provisions of the *School Act*, education is delivered by a system of schools operated by school boards and Francophone, charter school and accredited private school authorities for the benefit of students. The highest priority of the K – 12 education system is the success of every child in school. Each type of school authority assures the quality of education for its students and the Ministry of Education assures the quality of education provided by school authorities. The Ministry uses school authority Accountability Pillar information to assess and provide assurance to the public and the Legislative Assembly on the quality of education in Alberta's school system.

Accountability and Transparency in Alberta's K – 12 Education System

Accountability arises from a delegation of responsibility from one party to another and in the case of Alberta's K – 12 education system, from the provincial government to school authorities. Some discretion in how these delegated responsibilities are exercised is associated with the delegation to an accountable organization. This delegation of responsibilities also comes with an obligation to answer for and publicly report on the discharge of responsibilities, spending of public funds and results achieved by the accountable organization. This facilitates the transparency of the accountable organization. Consequences are applied to accountable organizations based on performance.

In Alberta's K – 12 education system, school authorities (school boards, Francophone school authorities, charter schools and accredited private school authorities) are considered accountable organizations. The Ministry of Education allocates funds to school authorities to fulfill their delegated responsibilities to provide education programs for Alberta's K – 12 students, which creates an accountability relationship between the Ministry and school authorities. This accountability relationship is established in legislation and regulation, as summarized below.

> ***Note:*** This document applies to charter school authorities. Separate planning and reporting documents for school boards and accredited-funded private schools are available online at:
>
> http://www.education.alberta.ca/admin/resources/planning/reporting2015.aspx

Legislative Authority

Section 78 of the *School Act* requires accountable organizations to develop an accountability system on any matter the Minister prescribes, to use accountability information and to report it to students, parents and electors in the manner the Minister prescribes. Section 7 of the *Education Grants Regulation* under the *Government Organization Act* requires recipients of grants from the Ministry of Education to provide the Minister, upon request, any information the Minister considers necessary for the purpose of determining whether or not the recipient has complied or is complying with the conditions of the grant. Section 13 of the *School Councils Regulation* under the *School Act* requires charter schools to provide their school council with the opportunity to be involved in the development of the school's three-year education plan and annual results report, and requires charter schools to provide the school's results and reasonable interpretation of provincial tests and other provincial measures to the school. The full text of these sections of legislation and regulations is provided in Appendix A.

Pursuant to the *Government Organization Act* and the *School Act*, and to operationalize the accountability relationships and processes established in provincial legislation, the *Policy and Requirements for Charter School Planning and Results Reporting* contains the Minister's requirements for charter school three-year education plans and annual education results reports. It also contains the updated school authority accountability policy.

The Minister's requirements in the *Policy and Requirements for Charter School Planning and Results Reporting* ensure that charter school plans and annual education results reports are aligned with the Ministry of Education's vision, mission, goals, outcomes and performance measures for the basic education system. In this way, these Ministry and charter school documents help ensure that the K – 12 education system is focused effectively and efficiently on meeting the educational needs of Alberta students.

At the same time, charter school plans incorporate local strategies and may incorporate local goals, priorities, outcomes and measures that reflect the unique characteristics and circumstances of their communities. Similarly, charter school results reports include information on local activities and results on provincial and local measures. As such, charter school education plans and annual education results reports reflect local needs and priorities within the context of provincial direction and framework.

In addition, charter schools have a unique purpose in Alberta's public education system to provide different and innovative approaches for improving student learning, not only for the benefit of their own students, but also to inform other schools for the benefit of students throughout Alberta's public education system.

School Authority Accountability Policy

School authorities are accountable for results achieved from carrying out their responsibilities to provide education programs to Alberta students. As accountable organizations, school authorities are required to:

- Establish a system of accountability for results that encompasses their schools.
- Interpret and report results to parents, students, the Ministry of Education and the public in a manner and at a time the Minister prescribes as part of ensuring transparency.
- Use results to improve the quality and effectiveness of education programs provided to their students and to improve student learning and achievement.

Accountability Framework for the K – 12 Education System

The Accountability Framework for the K – 12 education system is a formal structure established by the Ministry to support accountability and transparency throughout the system and to ensure alignment of school authorities and schools with provincial direction. This helps ensure the highest priority of the education system is the success of the student.

The Accountability Framework consists of:

- Three-Year Education Plans (3YEPs), which contain:
  - Measureable outcomes;
  - Performance measures to provide information on achievement of outcomes;
  - Targets to improve low or declining performance levels;
  - Strategies to achieve outcomes and improve results; and
  - Implementation of strategies and programs, adjusting if necessary.
- Annual Education Results Reports (AERRs) that publicly report results, assess achievement and indicate whether improvement has taken place; and
- Answering to the Ministry for performance results over time.

Reviewing Charter School Education Plans and Annual Education Results Reports

Alberta Education staff review 3YEPs and AERRs to:

- Enhance the department's understanding of the charter school's local context and priorities;
- Encourage charter school improvement efforts;
- Ensure consistency between the plan and the report;
- Monitor compliance with provincial requirements; and
- Identify implications for provincial planning.

Information on Accountability Pillar

Additional information on planning and reporting and explanatory information on the Accountability Pillar are available separately on the Ministry website:

School Authority Planning and Reporting Reference Guide

The Accountability Pillar of the Renewed Funding Framework Fact Sheet

Accountability in Alberta's Education System

Three-Year Education Plan (3YEP), 2015/2016 – 2017/2018

Components and Requirements for Charter School Education Plans

Charter school education plans must maintain a three-year time frame. Charter schools are required to consider their latest Accountability Pillar results when they review, adjust and roll the 3YEP forward each year.

Components of 3YEPs are in bold below and defined in Appendix B. An optional template for a combined 3YEP/AERR, pre-populated with the required Accountability Pillar information, will be provided to charter schools as part of the May 2015 Accountability Pillar reports.

Optional	**Message from Board Chair**
Required	**Accountability Statement**, signed by the board chair (see Appendix C for the wording to the Accountability Statements for 3YEPs, AERRs and the Accountability Statement to be used if the charter school combines its 3YEP and AERR into one document).
Optional	The **Accountability Pillar Overall Summary** in colour, as provided by Alberta Education on the Extranet.
Optional	**Foundation Statements** – vision, mission, principles and beliefs.
Optional	**A Profile of the Charter School**
Optional	**Trends and Issues**
Required	**Provincial Outcomes, Performance Measures, Targets and Strategies.** For each outcome, include: • The measures used to assess progress and achievement of the outcome (see Required Outcomes and Performance Measures). • Results and evaluations for the measures or reference to the overall summary page. • Targets for each year of the plan for measures with an overall evaluation of "Issue" or "Concern".

- At least one strategy to address the outcome.
- For measures with an overall evaluation of "Issue" or "Concern" based on the evaluation of Accountability Pillar results, clearly identify a strategy for improvement.

Optional Charter schools may include additional results or contextual information to help explain strategies and targets to parents and the public.

Required **Budget Summary.** This section presents summary information about the board's budget for the 3YEP. The budget summary **must** include:

- Charts/tables that summarize budget information consistent with the board's Fall Budget Update.
- A web link to the charter school's budget for 2015/2016.
- Key financial information about the upcoming school year. This section may refer to budgeted changes in enrolment, certificated and non-certificated staff, programs, funding, revenues and expenses, annual surpluses or deficits and accumulated surpluses.

Required **Summary of Facility and Capital Plans**. Include a web link to information on the charter school's facility and capital plans.

Required **Parental Involvement Strategies.** Indicate what the board has done to meet its obligations under Section 13 of the *School Councils Regulation* (Alberta Regulation 113/2007) to provide opportunity for school councils to be involved in updating school plans.

Required Charter schools have an **obligation to share their effective practices and innovative approaches** for the benefit of Alberta's education system as a whole. To support this, charter school education plans must include a Communication Plan that outlines how the school will carry out this obligation. The elements of a good communication plan include:

- Objectives,
- Audiences,
- Key messages, and
- An action plan including specific communication strategies and timelines.

Required **Timelines and Communication.** Charter schools must finalize their 3YEPs in the fall, considering the Provincial Achievement Test and Diploma Examination results and Accountability Pillar evaluations provided in early October 2015.

3YEPs must be approved by the board and posted on the charter school's website by November 30 each year.

Notify the Zone Director of the posting and include the permalink in the email notice. A permalink is a web link or url to a web page where the 3YEP is posted that does not change from year to year.

Note: Charter schools may combine their 3YEP and AERR into one document if they wish or continue to prepare and post two separate documents.

Required Outcomes and Performance Measures

Listed below are the required outcomes and performance measures for charter school 3YEPs, which align with Alberta Education's Business Plan 2015 - 2020. Targets for each year of the plan are required for all Accountability Pillar measures with an overall evaluation of "Issue" or "Concern." Combined 3YEP/AERR pre-populated template will use these goals, outcomes and performance measures.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">CHARTER GOALS, OUTCOMES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES
• Locally determined, consistent with Section 35 of the School Act, per the charter school's purpose/mandate.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">DESIRED OUTCOME ONE:
Every student is successful.</td><td>SPECIFIC OUTCOME: Students achieve student learning outcomes.
PERFORMANCE MEASURES
• Overall percentage of students who achieved the acceptable standard and the overall percentage of students who achieved the standard of excellence on Diploma Examinations.
• High school completion rate of students within three years of entering Grade 10.
• Annual dropout rate of students aged 14 to 18.
• High school to post-secondary transition rate of students within six years of entering Grade 10.
• Percentage of Grade 12 students eligible for a Rutherford Scholarship.
• Percentage of students writing four or more Diploma Examinations within three years of entering Grade 10.
• Overall teacher, parent and student agreement that students model the characteristics of active citizenship.
• Overall teacher and parent agreement that students are taught attitudes and behaviours that will make them successful at work when they finish school.
• Overall percentage of teacher and parent satisfaction that students demonstrate the knowledge, skills and attitude necessary for lifelong learning. (This measure is required for K-9 Charter schools.)</td></tr>
<tr><td>SPECIFIC OUTCOME: Students demonstrate a strong foundation in literacy and numeracy.
PERFORMANCE MEASURES
• Overall percentage of students in Grades 6 and 9 who achieved the acceptable standard and overall percentage of students who achieved the standard of excellence on Provincial Achievement Tests (based on cohort).</td></tr>
<tr><td>DESIRED OUTCOME TWO:
Alberta has quality teaching and school leadership</td><td>SPECIFIC OUTCOME: Teacher preparation and professional growth focus on the competencies needed to help students learn. Effective learning and teaching is achieved through collaborative leadership.
PERFORMANCE MEASURES
• Overall teacher, parent and student satisfaction with the opportunity for students to receive a broad program of studies, including fine arts, career, technology, health and physical education.</td></tr>
<tr><td>DESIRED OUTCOME THREE:
Alberta's education system is governed effectively</td><td>SPECIFIC OUTCOME: The education system demonstrates collaboration and engagement.
PERFORMANCE MEASURES
• Overall teacher and parent satisfaction with parental involvement in decisions about their child's education.
• Overall teacher, parent and student satisfaction with the overall quality of basic education.</td></tr>
</table>

	SPECIFIC OUTCOME: **Students and communities have access to safe and healthy learning environments.** PERFORMANCE MEASURES • Overall teacher, parent and student agreement that students are safe at school, learning the importance of caring for others, learning respect for others and are treated fairly at school. • Overall percentage of teachers, parents and students indicating that their school and schools in their jurisdiction have improved or stayed the same the last three years.
DESIRED OUTCOME FOUR: First Nations, Métis and Inuit students are successful	SPECIFIC OUTCOME: **The achievement gap between First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) students and all other students is eliminated.** PERFORMANCE MEASURES • Overall percentage of self-identified FNMI students in Grades 6 and 9 who achieved the acceptable standard and the percentage of self-identified FNMI students who achieved the standard of excellence on Provincial Achievement Tests. • Overall percentage of self-identified FNMI students who achieved the acceptable standard and the overall percentage of self-identified FNMI students who achieved the standard of excellence on Diploma Examinations. • High school completion rate of self-identified FNMI students within three years of entering Grade 10. • Annual dropout rate of self-identified FNMI students aged 14 to 18. • High school to post-secondary transition rate of self-identified FNMI students within six years of entering Grade 10. • Percentage of self-identified FNMI Grade 12 students eligible for a Rutherford Scholarship. • Percentage of self-identified FNMI students writing four or more Diploma Examinations within three years of entering Grade 10.
Notes	• The results for the required measures are available in the Accountability Pillar reports on Alberta Education's Extranet at https://phoenix.edc.gov.ab.ca/ • Consistent with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, when the number of students or survey participants in a group is fewer than six, results are not reported to protect individual privacy.

Annual Education Results Report (AERR), 2014/2015

Components and Requirements for Charter School Results Reports

The 2014-2015 AERR reports on the charter school's 3YEP for 2014/2015 – 2016/2017 and includes the components listed below in bold. An optional template for a combined 3YEP/AERR, pre-populated with the required Accountability Pillar information, will be provided to charter schools as part of the October 2015 Accountability Pillar reports.

Optional	**Message from Board Chair**.
Required	**Accountability Statement** signed by the board chair (see Appendix C for the wording to the Accountability Statements for 3YEPs, AERRs and the Accountability Statement to be used if the charter school combines its 3YEP and AERR into one document).
Required	The **Accountability Pillar Overall Summary** in colour provided by Alberta Education in October 2015. The Accountability Pillar Overall Summary must be placed near the beginning of the document.
Optional	**Summary of Accomplishments**. The charter school's accomplishments (impact of major activities/ strategies).
Required	Report the charter school's **Performance Measure Results** for 2014/2015 in relation to the goals, outcomes and targets for 2014/2015 set in the charter school's education plan (see Required Goals, Outcomes and Performance Measures). Specifically, for each required measure, report: • Five years of charter school results or available results if less than five years (reporting five years of comparative provincial results is optional). • Most recent result in relation to the target for 2014/2015 (if applicable). **Note**: Reporting provincial results is not required but may be useful in interpreting charter school results.

Optional	**Commentary on results**, such as contextual information, factors affecting performance or actions taken by the jurisdiction that may have contributed to evaluations of "Improved" or "Improved significantly" on Accountability Pillar measures, may be included.
Optional	**Future challenges**, such as changes in enrolment patterns, areas for improvement and how the charter school will address these.
Required	**Summary of Financial Results.** The financial summary: • Provides key financial information about the school year, including information on how the board spent its funding, significant changes over the prior year (if any) and whether spending was within budget (if not, why not and how deficits will be addressed). • Includes program expenditure information in a table or graph format for the primary audience – parents and other members of the school's community. • Indicates where detailed information on the charter school's sources of school-generated funds and their uses can be obtained.
Includes	• A web link to the Audited Financial Statements (AFS) and related unaudited schedules and provides the web link to the provincial roll up of AFS information: http://education.alberta.ca/admin/funding/audited.aspx • Indicate where more information can be obtained (e.g., contact at charter school).
Required	**Capital and Facilities Projects** Summarize, for parents and the public, progress on major school facilities projects, e.g., building renewal and construction for the previous school year, focusing on benefits to students.

Required **Parental Involvement Strategies.**

Indicate how the board met its obligations under the *School Councils Regulation* (updated 2007) to provide school councils the opportunity to be involved in school AERRs and to share results and interpretation of Accountability Pillar measures with the school council.

Required **Timelines and Communication.**

Charter schools must post their board approved AERR for 2014/2015 on their website in a publicly accessible format by **November 30, 2015 and notify the Zone Director** by email of the posting. The email notice must include the permalink to the document.

The AERR also must include the following information:

- A web link to the charter school AERR in both the print and posted versions;
- A web link to the charter school average class size report (or include the average class size report in an appendix to the AERR). The average class-size report must include average class size information for the 2014/2015 school year.

Required **Whistleblower Protection.**

Section 32 of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act* (2013) requires that school authorities include their annual report of disclosures in their Annual Education Results Report or combined Three-Year Education Plan/Annual Education Results Report. For a copy of the legislation or for further information and resources, please visit the Public Interest Commissioner's website at www.yourvoiceprotected.ca.

This component is required for reporting in November 2015.

Required Goals, Outcomes and Performance Measures

Listed below are the required goals, outcomes and performance measures for charter school AERRs, which align with Alberta Education's Business Plan 2014 - 2017. Charter schools choosing to prepare a combined 3YEP/AERR use components listed in the 3YEP section of this document instead of the ones shown below.

CHARTER GOALS, OUTCOMES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES • Locally determined, consistent with Section 35 of the *School Act*, per the charter school's purpose/mandate.	
GOAL ONE: An excellent start to learning	There are no required performance measures for this goal. School authorities are encouraged to incorporate early development data available at the local level.
GOAL TWO: Success for every student	**OUTCOME: Students achieve student learning outcomes.** PERFORMANCE MEASURES • Overall percentage of students who achieved the acceptable standard and the overall percentage of students who achieved the standard of excellence on Diploma Examinations. • High school completion rate of students within three years of entering Grade 10. • Annual dropout rate of students aged 14 to 18. • High school to post-secondary transition rate of students within six years of entering Grade 10. • Percentage of Grade 12 students eligible for a Rutherford Scholarship. • Percentage of students writing four or more Diploma Examinations within three years of entering Grade 10.
	OUTCOME: Students demonstrate proficiency in literacy and numeracy. PERFORMANCE MEASURES • Overall percentage of students in Grades 6 and 9 who achieved the acceptable standard and overall percentage of students who achieved the standard of excellence on Provincial Achievement Tests (based on cohort).
	OUTCOME: Students demonstrate citizenship and entrepreneurship. PERFORMANCE MEASURES • Overall teacher, parent and student agreement that students model the characteristics of active citizenship. • Overall teacher and parent agreement that students are taught attitudes and behaviours that will make them successful at work when they finish school. • Overall percentage of teacher and parent satisfaction that students demonstrate the knowledge, skills and attitude necessary for lifelong learning. (*This measure is required for K-9 Charter schools.*)
	OUTCOME: The achievement gap between First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) students and all other students is eliminated. PERFORMANCE MEASURES • Overall percentage of self-identified FNMI students in Grades 6 and 9 who achieved the acceptable standard and the percentage of self-identified FNMI students who achieved the standard of excellence on Provincial Achievement Tests. • Overall percentage of self-identified FNMI students who achieved the acceptable standard and the overall percentage of self-identified FNMI students who achieved the standard of excellence on Diploma Examinations. • High school completion rate of self-identified FNMI students within three years of entering Grade 10. • Annual dropout rate of self-identified FNMI students aged 14 to 18. • High school to post-secondary transition rate of self-identified FNMI students within six years of entering Grade 10. • Percentage of self-identified FNMI Grade 12 students eligible for a Rutherford Scholarship.

	• Percentage of self-identified FNMI students writing four or more Diploma Examinations *within three years of entering Grade 10.*
GOAL THREE: **Quality teaching and school leadership**	OUTCOME: **Teacher preparation and professional growth focus on the competencies needed to help students learn. Effective learning and teaching is achieved through collaborative leadership.** PERFORMANCE MEASURES • Overall teacher, parent and student satisfaction with the opportunity for students to receive a broad program of studies, including fine arts, career, technology, health and physical education.
GOAL FOUR: **Engaged and effective governance**	OUTCOME: **The education system demonstrates collaboration and engagement.** PERFORMANCE MEASURES • Overall teacher and parent satisfaction with parental involvement in decisions about their child's education. • Overall teacher, parent and student satisfaction with the overall quality of basic education.
	OUTCOME: **Students and communities have access to safe and healthy learning environments.** PERFORMANCE MEASURES • Overall teacher, parent and student agreement that students are safe at school, learning the importance of caring for others, learning respect for others and are treated fairly at school. • Overall percentage of teachers, parents and students indicating that their school and schools in their jurisdiction have improved or stayed the same the last three years.
Notes	• The results for the required measures are available in the Accountability Pillar reports on Alberta Education's Extranet at https://phoenix.edc.gov.ab.ca/ • Consistent with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, when the number of students or survey participants in a group is less than six, results are not reported to protect individual privacy.

Requirements for Charter School AERR Summaries

In addition to producing the November 2015 AERR, charter schools are required to produce a summary of their AERR that provides parents and community members with easy to understand information about the charter school's progress. The intent of this document is to improve communication, transparency and accountability to local stakeholders. The AERR Summary should not be more than two pages in length, be featured prominently on the jurisdiction's website and include the following components:

- A brief summary of the charter school's priorities and accomplishments relevant to parents and the community.
- A brief description of parental and community engagement efforts, how input was collected and how it informed decision-making and identified local priorities.
- Key highlights and challenges based on the charter school's results on the required performance measures.
- Other statistical, financial or performance information relevant to parents and the community.
- A web link to the full AERR document for the charter school.
- A web link to detailed financial information (as per the Summary of Financial Results component in the full AERR requirements).

The timelines and communication for the AERR Summary are the same as for the AERR:

- Charter schools must post their full AERR and AERR Summary for 2014/2015 on their website by **November 30, 2015 and notify the Zone Director** of the posting by e-mail. The e-mail notice must include the permalink to the two documents.

Examples are available online at:

http://www.education.alberta.ca/admin/resources/planning/reporting2015.aspx

Appendix A – Legislation and Regulation – Key Excerpts

Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000
Chapter S-3
School Act

Accountability of Board

78(1) A board shall develop a reporting and accountability system on any matter the Minister prescribes.

(2) A board shall disseminate any information in the reports and accounts produced under the reporting and accountability system it develops under subsection (1) to students, parents, electors or the Minister in the manner the Minister prescribes.

(3) A board shall use any information in the reports and accounts produced under the reporting and accountability system it develops under subsection (1) in the manner the Minister prescribes.

1995 c27 s9

Statutes of Alberta 2013
Chapter F-14.5
Fiscal Management Act

Accountable Organization

14(1) In this section, "accountable organization" means

(a) a Provincial agency other than a corporation referred to in section 2.2(4) of the Funds and Agencies Exemption Regulation (AR 128/2002),

(b) a Crown-controlled organization,

(c) a board under the School Act, or

(d) a regional health authority, subsidiary health corporation, community health council or provincial health board under the Regional Health Authorities Act.

(2) The governing body of an accountable organization must prepare and give to the Minister responsible for the accountable organization business plan and annual report for each fiscal year, in the form, at a time and containing the information, acceptable to the responsible Minister.

(3) The Minister responsible for an accountable organization that does not administer a budget and whose mandate is purely advisory may by order exempt that accountable organization from the requirements of subsection (2).

(4) An accountable organization must make the business plan or annual report referred to in subsection (2) publicly available after it is given to the Minister.

Alberta Regulation 120/2008
Government Organization Act
EDUCATION GRANTS REGULATION

General Authority to Make Grants

2. The Minister may make grants, in accordance with this Regulation, for any purpose related to any program, service or matter under the Minister's administration.

Conditions on which grants are made:

7. In addition to any conditions imposed by the Minister, it is a condition of every grant made under section (2)

(a) that the recipient shall

(i) use the grant only for the purpose for which it is made,

(ii) account to the Minister, in the manner that the Minister determines and to the Minister's satisfaction, for how the grant money or any portion of it was or is being used,

(iii) permit a representative of the Minister or the Auditor General to examine any books or records that the Minister or the Auditor General considers necessary to determine how the grant money has or is being used, and

(iv) provide to the Minister, on request, any information the Minister considers necessary for the purpose of determining whether or not the grant recipient has complied or is complying with the conditions of the grant.

Alberta Regulation 113/2007
School Act
SCHOOL COUNCILS REGULATION

Responsibilities of Board

13(1) A board must provide the school council with an opportunity to provide advice on the development of the school's

(a) mission, vision and philosophy,

(b) policies,

(c) annual education plan,

(d) annual results report, and

(e) budget

(2) A board must provide the school council with the school's provincial testing program results and other provincial measures and a reasonable interpretation of those results and measures.

B

Appendix B – Glossary of Planning and Accountability Terms

Accountability: An obligation to answer or account for assigned (delegated) responsibilities, e.g., for use of funds, results achieved and for taking action to make continuous improvement and achieve desired results. Accountability arises when one party delegates responsibility to another party. Some discretion on how responsibilities are carried out is associated with the delegation of responsibility to accountable organizations. In the public sector, accountability involves transparent public reporting of results as well as reporting to the organization, such as a government ministry, that delegated responsibilities and provided funding to an accountable organization. Consequences for performance are conferred by the delegating party.

Accountability Framework: A well-designed structure to ensure accountability within organizations and between governing bodies and delegated organizations (accountable parties). An accountability framework consists of measurable goals, performance measures that provide information on progress toward and achievement of outcomes, targets that indicate a desired level of performance, strategies that are implemented and adjusted as necessary to improve results over time, evaluation of results achieved, including whether improvement has taken place, public performance reports and consequences for the performance of accountable organizations.

Continuous Improvement: Using performance results to adjust strategies and practices so that improvement in performance is achieved over time.

Goals: Broad statements that look towards the long term and steer organizations in the direction of realizing their vision. Goals are typically expressed as desired conditions or aims.

Issues: Conditions that may affect the organization's ability to fulfill its mandate or achieve its goals.

Mission Statement: A clear, concise description of an organization's overall purpose and role. It gives direction to the programs and services that the school authority provides for its students.

Outcomes: Measurable statements of what an organization seeks to achieve. In broad terms, they answer the question, "What will this look like when we get to where we want to be?"

Performance Measures: Performance measures provide information on important, quantifiable aspects of the education system. They enable school authorities to assess progress toward achieving goals and outcomes.

Principles and Beliefs: Principles and beliefs guide decision-making and provide a foundation for developing mission, vision and goals.

Profile: A profile is a brief description of the school authority that gives context for the plan. Profiles include such information as characteristics of communities, students, programs, size and location.

Strategies: Strategies are actions that school authorities take to achieve goals and desired outcomes that meet the needs of all their students. They address local circumstances, issues, trends and opportunities.

Targets: Targets show desired levels of performance to be attained by a certain time. Targets are expressed quantitatively.

Trend: A trend shows a direction of data over time, e.g., enrolment growth.

Vision: A vision describes a possible and desired future state for the organization, grounded in reality, which inspires and guides decisions and actions.

Terms Related to the Accountability Pillar Evaluation
(in logical, rather than alphabetical order)

Accountability Pillar: The Accountability Pillar is one of the three pillars of the Renewed Funding Framework and enhances school authority accountability for results in return for greater flexibility in the allocation of resources. The Accountability Pillar places increased emphasis on the achievement of specific outcomes by evaluating and reporting results on a common set of measures and, where results are low or declining, taking action to improve student programs and results in subsequent years.

The focus of the Accountability Pillar is on improving school authority results and attaining high levels of achievement.

Accountability Pillar Performance Measures: The Accountability Pillar performance measures are a required, consistent set of measures, each of which is calculated on a comparable basis for all jurisdictions. School authorities are required to include this common set of performance measures and evaluations in their plans and report the results and updated evaluations for these measures in their AERRs. The measures draw from various kinds of data, including:

- Results of provincial testing programs;
- Student outcomes, such as dropout and high school completion rates, calculated from administrative data; and
- Student, parent and teacher perceptions from surveys.

Category: Accountability Pillar measures are grouped into seven categories that represent key aspects of education that are important to parents and the public:

- Safe and caring schools,
- Student learning opportunities,
- Student learning achievement (Grades K to 9),
- Student learning achievement (Grades 10 to 12),
- Preparation for lifelong learning, employment and citizenship,
- Parental involvement, and
- Continuous improvement.

Evaluation Methodology: The evaluation methodology assesses each measure in the Accountability Pillar in terms of achievement and improvement, then combines the achievement and improvement evaluations to calculate overall evaluations for measures and categories.

Achievement Evaluation: The achievement evaluation is based on comparing the current jurisdiction result against a set of provincial standards that are expected to be fixed for 7 – 10 years. The achievement evaluation results in one of the following five achievement levels: Very High, High, Intermediate, Low and Very Low.

Standard: A standard is an established, quantifiable level of performance that is commonly understood and agreed upon, and is the basis for judging actual performance. The standards for each Accountability Pillar measure are calculated from baseline data (based on the distribution of results for all school boards at a fixed point in time).
The 5th, 25th, 75th and 95th percentiles of the distribution of the baseline results are used to establish the five achievement evaluation levels (listed above under "Achievement Evaluation").

Baseline: Baseline data constitute a starting point for comparisons of results against standards. Baseline data for each Accountability Pillar measure are established by averaging each school board's results across the three years to create a three-year average. The three years that form the baseline for calculating standards differ among measure types, depending on data availability:

- For student achievement measures (i.e., Provincial Achievement Tests and Diploma Examinations), the baseline three-year average uses data from school years 2010/2011, 2011/2012, and 2012/2013.

- For the student outcome measures (dropout, Diploma Examination participation, high school completion and post-secondary transition rates), the baseline three-year average uses data from the 2000/2001, 2001/2002 and 2002/2003 school years, except for the Rutherford Scholarship eligibility rates, which, starting with the 2007/08 results provided in May 2009, uses data from 2004/2005, 2005/2006 and 2006/2007 for the baseline three-year average.

- For survey measures, the baseline three-year average uses results from 2003/2004, 2004/2005 and 2005/2006.

Improvement Evaluation: The improvement evaluation focuses on improvement over time. Improvement is evaluated by comparing the jurisdiction's current result against the authority's previous three-year average using chi-square. (Chi square is a statistical test to determine the probability that there is no significant difference between an observed outcome and the expected outcome. In the case of the Accountability Pillar improvement evaluation, the chi square test is used to determine the probability that there is no significant difference between a jurisdiction's current result on a measure and its prior three-year average for that measure.) The improvement evaluation results in one of the following five improvement levels: Improved Significantly, Improved, Maintained, Declined and Declined Significantly.

Overall Measure Evaluation: Once the improvement and achievement levels have been calculated for a measure, an overall measure evaluation is calculated, which reflects both the achievement evaluation and the improvement evaluation. The overall measure evaluation is reported on a five point scale: Excellent, Good, Acceptable, Issue and Concern.

Category Evaluation: For each category of Accountability Pillar measures, the overall evaluations for each measure within that group are averaged to provide an evaluation for that category. The averaging is done by assigning the following numbers to the overall evaluation for each measure: Excellent: 2; Good: 1; Acceptable: 0; Issue: -1, and Concern: -2. These values are averaged and rounded to the nearest whole number. This result is then compared with the above list of assigned numerical values for each of the five evaluation ratings to determine the evaluation for the category.

Improvement/Decline: Improvement or decline for an Accountability Pillar measure is determined by comparing the current result against the previous three-year average using the chi-square test of statistical significance. Using the chi-square test:

- An **improvement or decline** occurs when the current result is at least one standard deviation above or below the previous three-year average, but less than two standard deviations.

- A **significant improvement or decline** (at the 5% level of confidence, or 19 times out of 20) occurs when the current result is approximately two or more standard deviations above or below the previous three-year average.

Target: Targets related to achievement standards are set for each year of the plan when the evaluation of results for a measure is "Issue" or "Concern". These targets for Accountability Pillar measures:

- Have a higher numerical value each year than the current result (except for dropout rates, where a lower result shows improvement).

- Show reasonable progress toward or move into the next higher achievement standard over the three years.

Making gains over time toward the next achievement level or attaining it will be reflected in the improvement evaluation as well. At minimum the improvement evaluation would be "Maintained," and could be "Improved" or "Improved Significantly."

C

Appendix C – Accountability Statements

Accountability Statements are required for stand-alone 3YEPs and AERRs. Charter schools that continue to prepare 3YEPs and AERRs as separate documents use the Accountability Statements below.

Accountability Statement for the Three-Year Education Plan

The Education Plan for **(name of charter school)** for the three years commencing September 1, **(year)** was prepared under the direction of the Board in accordance with the responsibilities under the *School Act* and the *Fiscal Management Act*. This Education Plan was developed in the context of the provincial government's business and fiscal plans. The Board has used its performance results to develop the Plan and is committed to implementing the strategies contained within the Plan to improve student learning and results.

The Board approved the Education Plan for 2015/2018 on _____ (month and day), 2015.

Accountability Statement for the Annual Education Results Report

The annual education results report for **(name of charter school)** for the **(year)** school year was prepared under the direction of the board in accordance with the responsibilities under the *School Act* and the *Fiscal Management Act*. The board is committed to using the results in this report, to the best of its abilities, to improve outcomes for students and to ensure that all students in the charter school can acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to be self-reliant, responsible, caring and contributing members of society.

This Annual Education Results Report for 2014/2015 was approved by the Board on _____ (month and day), 2015.

Charter schools that combine their AERR and 3YEP into a single document use the following Accountability Statement:

Accountability Statement for the Combined Annual Education Results Report and Three-Year Education Plan

The Annual Education Results Report for the **(year)** school year and the Education Plan for the three years commencing September 1, **(year)** for **(name of charter school)** were prepared under the direction of the Board in accordance with its responsibilities under the *School Act* and the *Fiscal Management Act*. This document was developed in the context of the provincial government's business and fiscal plans. The Board has used the results reported in the document, to the best of its abilities, to develop the Education Plan and is committed to implementing the strategies contained within the Education Plan to improve student learning and results.

The Board approved this combined Annual Education Results Report for the 2014/2015 school year and the three-year Education Plan for 2015/2018 on _____ (month and day), 2015.